

766 name were taken to the usual place, where they were placed on a scaffold or interred, according to the parents' preference.

775 The Mandan believed that there was a Baby Hill near Fort Clark, another near the Heart River, and a third near Dickinson which had interiors like an earth lodge, in which an old man cared for them. If a child died before being named, it returned to the Baby Hill. People claimed to have seen baby tracks on the tops and sides of these hills. It was believed that the spirits in the hill near the Heart River came north when the Mandan came north. If a woman had been married a number of years and was childless, desiring a child, she would go to one of these hills to pray for one. Those wanting a daughter brought girl's clothing and a ball; for a son she brought a small bow and arrow. The Mandan believed in rebirth. Calf Woman's grandfather said he was one who had been reborn. One of her grandchildren had a spot on her hip, and it was thought she was one who had lived before. It was believed that children choose the mother they want and that a child resembling a sibling who had died was the reincarnation of the other child. The Mandan cite numerous instances of culture heroes who selected a mother when desiring to be born into the tribe.

553 A girl usually keeps her first name as long as she lives. If she was sick or unlucky, her parents frequently put up a feast to get a new name for her. If she had grown up, her brothers and sisters helped her prepare a renaming feast.

853 A nursing child frequently developed a sore mouth which interfered with its feeding. In such cases, the parents selected a man of the child's father's clan to cure it by piercing the skin of the ceremonial father's leg and permitting the child to suck of his blood. A payment was made to the man selected by the child's clan brothers and sisters.

#### TRAINING

861 The child's training was both economic and ritualistic and differed according to the sex of the child. A girl was trained in lodge management, household arts, gardening, curing of meat, and certain ritualistic practices, receiving her instruction primarily from the women of the lodge. A boy was taught hunting and fishing and went out while still a boy to help bring meat

back to the village. Economic training came largely from his father and the older men of the lodge. If he were inclined to be lazy, his mother would talk to him, while her brother would shame him and accuse him of bringing disgrace to the clan. 861 868 562

A boy was taught to begin fasting when he was eight or nine years of age. The parents would tell him of the benefits he would receive and cite the various eminent men of the village who had attained their position from this practice. The mother's brother and his older brothers would give him goods to take into the Okipa to present to some man of his father's clan and designate the person entitled to the gift. An older brother planning to fast would bring a younger brother to the Okipa ceremony and instruct him, sending him home when he thought he had been there long enough, while the father would give him some small article from his ceremonial bundle to wear, thinking it would help to get a "vision." 861 869 785

A lodge "grandfather" contributed a great deal to a boy's education. He would make toy bows and arrows and teach him to use them. If he had a fish trap, his grandsons did much of the work of carrying willows to the bank for weaving into sections for the walls, and he would permit them to bail the fish out of the trap. He would teach them games, especially techniques and skills which would be useful in warfare, and tell them stories. Using rivalry between the moieties, these old men who were too old to hunt would arrange the boys ten years and younger on sides and teach them to use shields for their protection, shooting at each other with arrows on the blunt ends of which a ball of mud or wrapped hide had been attached. 868 616

Not to be discounted in the training of a young Mandan boy or girl was the informal education they received by living in intimate contact with the entire village population, observing the conduct of others, and being kept informed of contemplated group action by the village "criers" who announced each decision of the village leaders. He learned that he must treat different relatives in various ways and that they would laugh at him if he did not. Learning that he was expected to treat different relatives the same way his brothers did, he imitated his older brothers unconsciously and followed their advice. 861 867

A girl's education was essentially the same as a boy's except 861 862 602

861 that a different set of relatives instructed her for a different set  
 • 862 of economic pursuits. The women of the lodge were responsible  
 602 for her training. They gave her toys, related stories and tradi-  
 tions, and taught her to care for her younger siblings. Her moth-  
 er taught her to harness the dogs and took her to the forest for  
 firewood. Some of my informants' most tender memories were  
 of the times when as young girls, their mothers had given them  
 dogs with harnesses, and had taken them along in gathering  
 brush for the fires. The mother-daughter bonds were of deep af-  
 fection. When the women of the lodge dressed hides, the daugh-  
 ter would help, and she had her own sewing kit containing awls,  
 sinew thread, paints, beads, and porcupine quills, and she was  
 taught the techniques of hide dressing and decoration, giving  
 those who helped her little presents to express her affection. As  
 a little girl, she made crude pots when the women of the lodge  
 were making pottery, and, when old enough, she bought her  
 mother's rights in the techniques and designs of pottery-  
 making.

861 Parents owning rights in age-grade societies encouraged their  
 561 children to join an age-grade society. Those too young to be-  
 602 long to a society would see older ones dancing. A girl's older  
 sisters and women of the lodge would explain the procedure of  
 buying as a group and helped collect goods for the transfer of  
 the society to the younger girls. Membership in a society intro-  
 duced a series of new obligations. Heretofore her obligations  
 were with the persons of her parental household. As a member  
 of an organized female group, composed largely of persons of  
 her own age and outside her own household, she was called on  
 to prepare robes and other clothing for the brother or husband  
 of a society member who was buying a ceremonial bundle or  
 was having rites performed for the renewal of a bundle. As a  
 member of an organized group she likewise received assistance  
 when her own family was buying rights in a sacred bundle. Col-  
 lectively she treated those in the next older group as mothers  
 and those in the group younger than her own as daughters.

Preadolescent boys also joined an age-grade society, buying as  
 a group from the older boys on the advice of their parents. All  
 boys of the age eligible to buy would organize to join. Some boys  
 were not interested; some households were temporarily broken

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703 of the cattail plant in his hair. Those stabbed by a knife or spear could wear a stick carved to resemble a knife. One who had been shot in battle painted red spots on his shirts, leggings, or robes with red stripes below to indicate bullet holes and blood dripping from the wounds. Men painted horse tracks on their blankets to indicate the horses they had stolen. These tracks were bunched to indicate the number taken on each expedition.

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581 Small children too young to remember their parents were frequently taken prisoners and adopted into the village. They were "struck" by the warriors who were given credit toward their war record but such records were not related during ceremonies once the children were adopted into the households. Girls approaching marriageable age were frequently returned alive to the village and sold to those needing an extra wife.

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703 Women also qualified for war honors and were eligible to wear the same decorations as men. Informants remembered a number of women who had struck an enemy and had displayed their war honors during the Scalp Dance. One woman concealed herself at the entrance to her lodge and hit an Assiniboine on the head with a stone hammer. She scalped him and, during the dances, received a hearty applause whenever she was leader of the line of dancers, carrying her scalp on a stick.

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703 The war records enumerated above constitute the principal awards having social recognition and fall into two general groups: awards limited solely to war leaders and consisting of scalps which were worn on their clothing or carried on scalp sticks and awards to warriors consisting of peculiar painting of the clothing, wearing of coyote tails, and certain feathers. Only those who had led many war parties and had been successful attained the highest ranks as chiefs unless their lack of significant successes in warfare was compensated with a record of many feasts during which time much property was given away or the possession of important tribal bundles. There was a series of designs painted or woven on robes which proclaimed the amount of goods so disposed of.

#### MARRIAGE AND THE HOUSEHOLD

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584 Marriage was an exceedingly important event among the leading families of a Mandan village, but for the average family

736 In the event of separation or death the children were provided for by the mother's household, with the father's household generally disregarding them.

581 These various accounts of types of marriage might be analyzed at length; it is sufficient here to note some significant  
556 situations which can be explained as accounting for the variations that occur as well as the number of different relatives participating in one way or another. We have noted the great emphasis placed on wealth and the part it played at the naming of a child. There was a comparable display of wealth when a young man returned from his first successful war expedition. Mandan informants speak of advancement in the tribe as steps in a ladder. As one took a new step, he made certain payments. For those of eminence, marriage was treated in the same way. Except for those marriages which involved bundle purchase, marriage was secular in character and involved only a few people.

162 Plains warfare greatly unbalanced the proportion of women to men. My census of the Mandan as of 1870-72 showed that males constituted only 38 per cent of the total population. A similar proportion was found for Hidatsa men. If we disregard all children under fifteen years of age, the proportion of men would be even smaller. The women of the household played an  
● 562 exclusive role in gardening unless one considers the use of  
462 young men as watchmen during the day to prevent a surprise attack by their enemies. The women built the earth lodges except for the raising of the heavier rafters and repaired them from time to time. They dressed the hides and made all the household goods. They did most of the butchering, except when animals were killed at a distance from the village. And they found time to participate in many of the men's ceremonies besides having ceremonies of their own. They were acquainted with ceremonies in which tribal custom did not permit their participation and on some occasions were intrusted with important ritualism ultimately to be transferred to their children. They reared their families and trained them without a great deal of help from their husbands. Some lodge groups in 1870-72 had had no male old enough to hunt for ten years or more. Informants thought that the physical needs of such households were pretty well taken care of by the tribal system of mutual

THE MANDAN LIFE-CYCLE

assistance and the fact that the game run into yards was divided on a moiety basis.

Households having no males suffered most in their ceremonial life. When an important tribal bundle got out of the lodge, it was usually difficult to get it back.

Marriage within the clan was not permitted. There was no punishment other than tribal criticism, and in the census taken as of 1870-72 only one instance was reported by informants, and all the informants questioned on this point mentioned the case. The one instance of marriage within the clan was between Standing Bear and Beaver Woman; though the tribe did not approve of the marriage, they thought that in a way it was justified, since Beaver Woman's mother suggested the marriage after both parties were over fifty-five years of age. The women were brought to Standing Bear's lodge, and the marriage was entered into after the women lost their lodge.

Certain Mandan clans had Hidatsa equivalents. Both had a Prairie Chicken clan; the Mandan WaxikEna clan was considered equivalent to the Hidatsa Maxoxati; the Tamisik clan was equivalent to the Hidatsa Knife clan. The Mandan were not in agreement as to the wisdom of marriage between Mandan-Hidatsa equated clans. Some treated them as separate lineages and considered marriage permissible. Bad Gun's wife's younger sister, however, refused to marry him, believing that the Tamisik and Knife were divisions of a single clan.

The Mandan claim that moieties were exogamous until after 1837 and that it was more convenient to go through the ceremonies with the wives when they were of opposite moieties, giving as the basis for the breakdown of the moieties the shortage of men. People preferred to marry into the moiety to marrying outside the tribe.

Both the levirate and the sororate were permissible. When a man married to the older sister died, a younger brother had first chance to marry the widow, which he could do with only a token payment. Such marriages were highly regarded. This was rarely done, since, with a shortage of men, the younger brother was usually already married to several women. When a wife died, the husband could claim one of her younger sisters as wife, and she seldom refused, especially if her sister had small children.

man who drew his gun when being driven back and was killed by the Black Mouths. Usually it was the duty of one's brothers to revenge a sibling's death, but in this instance siblings took no action. The Black Mouths were believed to be the bravest men of the village. Before making an attack on the enemy, their leaders would stick their lances into the ground which meant that they would not retreat. When on the summer buffalo hunts they received their orders from the leader and were instructed to prevent premature hunting and to see that the party did not break up. Although they endeavored to prevent war parties from leaving the village when there was danger of attack, they inflicted no punishment when an unauthorized war party returned.

It was believed that an individual's influence with sacred things advanced in age. They were consulted on sacred matters and were offered their "sons'" wives frequently during the buffalo ceremonies. Men and women assisted in the disposal of the dead. It was a man's duty to assist a clan sister in the construction of the scaffold for one whose father was of their clan, to superintend the painting and wrapping of the body.

#### OLD AGE AND DEATH

The old people were respected members of the household. The grandfather would assist the youngsters of the lodge in making toys and in playing their simple games, but he was always held in high regard as the one from whom the child's father had acquired much of his training in sacred matters. Having more time to give to the instruction of the children of the lodge, he would assist them in learning stories if the children were interested in hearing them. The older women assisted the younger women about the lodge and in the gardens but were not expected to do much work.

The older women were organized into two age-grade societies which were sacred in character. Women of advanced middle age joined the Goose Society and, when they had reached the menopause, sold to younger women and bought into the White Buffalo Cow Society.<sup>3</sup> As members of these societies they were respected for their supernatural powers over agriculture and

3. See the chapters on ceremonialism for an account of their origin.

888 hunting. Women holding rights in the various Holy Women  
561 bundles also met whenever a medicine feast was given. Their  
562 rights were individually acquired by assisting their husbands or  
brothers in the bundle purchase. Some of their number were  
members of the Goose or the White Buffalo Cow societies.

888 The older people performed an important role in the cere-  
562 monies so long as they were not too feeble to get around. Women  
who had assisted others at childbirth became doctors after the  
menopause and could substitute for a man in a great many of  
the societies. In many ceremonies they were the medium  
through which the traditions and bundles were transmitted to  
a legitimate male heir.

888 Fasting was generally completed by the time one reached  
785 fifty years of age. In case of repeated bad luck or failure to  
755 attain a definite goal, fasting for short periods was practiced  
during a ceremony. When an epidemic of sore eyes broke out  
at Fishhook Village, one old woman fasted to seek relief from  
her affliction. Since her eye trouble was cleared up shortly after-  
ward, quite a number of middle-aged and old people fasted to  
cure the ailment. Calf Woman said that more than half of them  
got relief.

888 People who were past middle age and who had been rela-  
431 tively successful all their lives would frequently have bad  
781 dreams in which they were being killed and cut up by the enemy  
or were drowning. It was believed that one could forestall this  
misfortune by giving away all his property. He would call in  
those who had been successful and were owners of important  
tribal bundles to give away his property, consisting of robes  
and bedding, household utensils, dogs, and horses, until the  
family was utterly destitute. One doing this would walk through  
the village repeating the dream. When the bad dream failed to  
materialize within the designated time, such people were said  
to be holy and as such were called the "protectors of the vil-  
lage." In appreciation of their sacrifices, each household group  
was expected to contribute something toward their comfort.

888 The old people had privately owned game pits and were en-  
421 titled to the animals found in them. According to tradition, be-  
124 fore horses were acquired, pits were widely used and owned by  
households. Ruins of game pits are still to be seen in consider-

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773 mony. In the beginning, the people lived an extremely simple life without tools and weapons. At that time there were no societies and only a few simple rites, one of which was a Buffalo Dance in which one man danced. It is believed that, as time passed, the people acquired skills along many lines; there was a corresponding development of mutual obligations; new societies and ceremonies were adopted which grew in complexity. It is also believed that there was a parallel development of the Okipa ceremony from the simple Buffalo Dance to its complex form as performed until seventy-five years ago, and that the cultural growth of the tribe was divided into four periods which were represented by the four days of the ceremony.

The principal characters in the ceremony were Lone Man (NumakmaxEna), Speckled Eagle (Hoita), Giver of Ceremony (Koni'saka), and the singers.

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614  
778 Lone Man was without question the tribe's most important deity. The original Lone Man belonged to the WaxikEna clan, and a bundle was founded which contained all the articles used by the Lone Man impersonator during the ceremony. Inheritance was through the WaxikEna clan. Before the smallpox epidemics, there were at least two similar and graded bundles in each village, and the men holding rights in the Okipa met to select from their number those who would officiate during the next ceremony.

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424 According to tradition the original Lone Man established the rule that the bundle should belong to the WaxikEna clan. However, before he left the tribe, he desired a white buffalo robe owned by his brother's son. The young man offered to exchange his robe for Lone Man's bundle, and this transaction was made, the bundle and office passing temporarily from the WaxikEna clan. The principal bundle was kept, after the smallpox epidemic of 1837, at Nuptadi Village, and a secondary bundle was kept by the other village group. Women could inherit and buy the bundle but could not officiate in the rites. Beaver's brother owned a bundle originally at Nuptadi Village prior to 1837. When he died, his sister transferred the bundle to her daughters, Shells and Grows First, who were both of the WaxikEna clan. Little Eagle, who had married the two sisters, paid them for the right to officiate in the ceremony. He then

MANDAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

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number of robes and other clothing to be given away were especially highly respected by the tribe.

The Okipa Maker was not permitted to kill any buffaloes or to do any butchering during the period he was under pledge to give the Okipa, nor was he permitted to eat any of the entrails from the buffalo. It was believed to have done so would have angered the buffaloes.

One of the oldest men of the WaxhikEna clan lived in the Okipa lodge with his family. He was custodian of such ceremonial objects as might be kept there to be used in succeeding Okipa ceremonies. When the time came to prepare for the ceremony, the NumakmaxEna gave instructions that the lodge be cleared of all the family's personal effects. Four men with Holy Women bundle rights swept the floor, carried out the ashes, and sprinkled the floor to settle the dust, after which sage was scattered about on the floor. Each received a robe from the Okipa Maker for his services. No women were permitted to go inside the lodge after it was cleaned until the ceremony had ended.

The one who was to represent Lone Man asked four men owning ceremonial bundles of The Woman Above (Sun ceremony) to paint the interior of the lodge.<sup>9</sup> At the last performance of the Okipa, the entire interior of the earth lodge was painted, the west half being black and the east half red. Formerly, only a narrow band about four inches wide was painted on each post, black on the west posts and red on the east ones. Woman Above bundle-owners each received a robe for painting the posts.

*Opening the Okipa lodge.*—When all was ready, the crier (the old man of WaxikEna clan living in the medicine lodge) went through the village before daylight announcing that the Lone Man would open the Okipa lodge the next morning at sunrise in order that the ceremony could be given. The head chief,<sup>10</sup> second chief,<sup>11</sup> council of old men, and all the owners of important tribal bundles painted their faces black and went to the head

9. There were only three Woman Above bundle-owners when the last performance was held, and one of these belonged to a woman, Calf Woman. The two other owners, Ears and Clam Necklace, painted the lodge with the assistance of two Hidatsa men owning similar bundles.

10. Red Buffalo Corn was head chief at Like-a-Fishhook Village.

11. Bad Gun was second chief at Like-a-Fishhook Village.

THE OKIPA CEREMONY

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worn like an apron. He wore the hair shed from a buffalo over his head and carried Lone Man's pipe and pemmican balls, which he placed on the ground in front of the drummers. Then he walked to the south side of the sacred cedar and stood on the buffalo skull he had previously placed there. Grasping the wooden planks inclosing the cedar with both hands and pressing his forehead against the wood, he asked Lone Man to hear him and send the people all they asked for, to bring the buffaloes near the villages, and to keep all bad luck away. 796 782

At the completion of the Okipa Maker's prayer and while he stood grasping the wooden inclosure, the drummers and rattlers began singing; this was the signal for the fasters to come out. They were dressed in their robes with the hair side out and hooked at each other in imitation of a herd of buffaloes as they danced toward the sacred cedar in a double line,<sup>19</sup> one line going to the east of the sacred cedar, the other to the west side. There they formed a straight line on the south side and danced forward and backward in front of the Okipa Maker, who continued his weeping, addressing the first Lone Man to help the people. When the drummers changed the song to one with a rapid tempo, the fasters and the Okipa Maker returned to the Okipa lodge, imitating a herd of buffaloes as they entered the lodge following the Okipa Maker. 796 535

The drummers, Okipa Maker, and fasters came out to dance four times the first day, and the procedure was the same on each occasion. They came out at sunrise, before noon, at mid-afternoon, and just before sunset.

Just before dark, after dancing outside had finished for the day, women brought willow firewood to the Okipa lodge, where it was placed in two piles on each side of the door. Women of the WaxikEna-Tamisik moiety placed theirs on the west side, while the other clans placed theirs on the east side. Male representatives of the two divisions of the tribe carried in the wood for the fire, since women were not permitted inside the lodge. The small boys and many of the young men left the Okipa lodge at the end of the first day, usually leaving from thirty to fifty fasters who intended to remain the entire four days without 796 562

19. Each half represented one of the moieties. The fasters were also symbolic of the animals held captive in Dog Den. 796 785

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171 played by the Hidatsa in the NaxpiE ceremony, the Sun Dance equivalent of that tribe, as was the case with the Mandans in their Okipa ceremony, where the one tortured was suspended until he became unconscious. This practice was modified in later years to conform with the Hidatsa custom.

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765 The custom of cutting off fingers in mourning was universally practiced by the women but rarely by the men. The sacrifice of fingers as a means of self-torture was practiced by men and in only a few instances by women who, upon the death of a relative through warfare, sought by self-torture to revenge the relative's slaying at a time when her brothers contemplated a retaliatory raid on the enemy's camp during which time she would be fasting. Those seeking visions used a buffalo skull to cut the fingers on when a vision was sought.

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785 Four Bears' fasting record at the base of a large oak tree in which a raven had its young, to learn the name of the Arikara who had killed his brother, is still related as an example of the power which the supernatural had to clarify past deeds and bring success to the one adopted.

#### SCATTERCORN'S NARRATIVE OF FOUR BEARS'

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539 A Mandan named Four Bears sent his younger brother out with the horses to a spot farther from the village where there was more grass. The Arikara came and killed the boy. The men found him with a spear stuck through his body, which was a challenge to Four Bears to come and fight if he thought he was lucky. Four Bears went out and brought the boy back to the village and saved the spear. He had already fasted in the Okipa and had many gods, but he began fasting again. He would fast and cry for seven days and nights without food and then come back to the village to rest. Then he would go out fasting again. He fasted near a high tree in which the ravens had a nest. He cut the flesh on his chest and inserted sticks with which he hung from the tree until he fell exhausted. He cut gashes in his legs and arms. One time he cut off a finger and offered it to the People Above and the raven that had its nest there.

The bird said, "It is an easy thing. You will find the man who killed your brother." The raven promised him that he could also bring rain. The bird added, "The one who killed your brother is named Bear Necklace, and he is the one you should kill."

In those days the dogs had names, so a clan father of Four Bears brought a dog to Four Bears to name, and he gave it the name Bear Necklace even before he killed the man. When Four Bears killed the Arikara without losing a man, and everything happened just as he had said the raven had predicted, he was highly respected.

1. This incident is mentioned in George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, I (Philadelphia, 1857), 238-41.

## PERSONAL BUNDLES

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lose any Young Wolves. It would be a blur to my record to 'kick the stone' so I am going back." The others returned with him. 726  
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When we came back, there was nothing of importance until we reached the Killdeer Mountains, where a Sioux war party saw us. We took the middle of the flat east of the Killdeer Mountains, and one of the party killed an antelope. We wasted no time pulling the hide off, and went right on to Red Paint Creek. I laid the hide out to dry to use on my horse that had a sore back. While we were roasting the meat, a whirlwind took the hide up into the air and whirled it, all the time with the flat side down.

When it happened, we said as a joke, "The enemy is upon us," but each of us jumped onto his horse and followed the creek down to the Little Missouri. We did not stop until we reached Cedar Butte, four miles above Hans Creek, when we went into an elm thicket to rest the horses. While there, an owl came and hooted. The enemy had outnumbered us ten to one and had been watching us from the Killdeer Mountains. They thought they had us, but it was the whirlwind that saved us. It was almost a miracle that we escaped the enemy. [The enemy was never seen but was merely suspected by the signs.] From our camp in Hans Creek we left at dawn without food and rode until we reached Manure Creek, where we grazed our horses in a clearing in the woods and cooked meat. We reached Like-a-Fishhook Village at sunset.

Puts Away His Hair got no credit for the lodge even though he found it just where his medicine said it would be.

The Mandan distinguished two kinds of supernatural experiences, those which were received through dreams and those actually seen, the latter being considered the more reliable. Crows Heart thought that what one actually saw could be depended on, whereas all dreams were not real. Scattercorn told of a Mandan who was visiting the Crow Indians. She said: "A friend took him to the top of a high mountain. While there a storm came up so they sought shelter under a cliff. During the night Thunderbird came by with his wings straight out. The lightning came out of his neck, and, when he moved his wings ever so little, it thundered. This Mandan really saw this bird, and it was his guardian after that." 787

All women fasted at least once during their lifetime. Self-torture was rarely practiced except in unusual instances. Scattercorn recalled an instance when three brothers were killed by the Cheyennes, who had been in the village exchanging robes for corn. When they left, they met men coming back loaded with meat. No precautions were taken when they saw the Cheyennes, since they knew what their mission had been. The brothers of the slain men fasted and practiced self-torture to get supernatural aid. When the war party left, one sister cut off two fingers 785  
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562 and offered them to the sky-gods. She slashed her legs and arms where they had just healed after the mourning cuts she had inflicted. She fasted four days. Although she did not receive a vision, she attributed the unusual success of the war party to her sacrifices.

Men and women never fasted at the same places. Women usually fasted in their gardens or on the corn scaffolds. Women could pledge to give the Okipa, in which case they were permitted to fast on the roof, while a brother assumed the responsibilities of Okipa Maker. They rarely fasted more than one day and night at a time. The supernatural powers which one received were believed to be in direct proportion to one's suffering. Front Woman did not think women needed as powerful guardians as men, so she fasted only one day and night until she contracted sore eyes which would not heal. She and her mother's sister who also had eye trouble paid for the right to fast on the Okipa lodge while the ceremony was being held. Her eyes improved, but her mother's sister's eyes did not. Both fasted during the four days of the ceremony but returned to their lodge at evening.

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428 Doctoring rights were included with most tribal hereditary bundles, and the rights to doctor were sold with the bundle. Such rights could also be acquired through supernatural instructions or purchased from one who had secured the right through visions. The latter practice, though common, did not continue for more than two or three generations. Only tribal bundles continued the hereditary character of doctoring rights generation after generation and with little change. Both men and women doctored. Women rarely doctored outside their own family until after the menopause.

The following account is typical of doctoring beliefs and practices.

#### MRS. GOOD BEAR'S NARRATIVE OF DOCTORING

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159 My mother, Stays Yellow, fasted in the woods in quest of a god. Just before daylight she fell asleep. In her dream she saw two old people doctoring a woman who was having difficulty bearing a child. She saw that they were using black roots [Black Medicine] which they dug up in the forest. The old people, a man and a woman, had a hide rattle decorated with white feathers. She listened to the song they were singing. At the same time they administered to the woman giving birth to the child, they were doctoring to a number of dead watersnakes. The old woman chewed the roots and blew the chewed-up mass over the snakes; each time she blew on a snake, it came alive and

796 over from the women's camp. Afterward the trapper smoked.  
 223 Each trapper, after eating, discussed happenings at the pit, and, from the information thus supplied, the leader offered suggestions for increasing the catch. When birds circled the bait but would not come down, it was suggested that raw meat be used. Sometimes the birds flew by without appearing to see the bait, and decoys were recommended.

223 The leader did not have a pit for his own use but remained in camp. However, if the wind was from the wrong direction in the morning and the men were out hunting game, he could go into any of the pits should the wind change to the west.

223 Evenings were spent in storytelling. The leader would acquaint the trappers with the myths associated with eagle-trapping. There were many of these myths, and a good leader would be able to consume every evening for the usual four weeks in camp without exhausting his stock. Each was related in great detail with endless repetitions. Some of the longer myths consumed four nights in telling; others were short and could be related in one night. All were expected to listen attentively while seated on a buffalo robe. Those who nodded were pinched with the bird stick. An example of the stories told is given in the Appendix.

123 The position of women in eagle-trapping ceremonies varied among bundle-owners. (1) Most bundle-owners prohibited  
 • 562 women from entering the ceremonial lodge or looking inside. (2) Several bundle-owners had special rites to which women were invited when birds had been caught. (3) A few bundle-owners required a menstruating woman to come into the lodge and breathe the smoke from sage burned at the four corners of the fire pit.

223 Unless special rites relative to the women were purchased, they were required to stay away from the ceremonial lodge and its vicinity. The right to bring women into the lodge was a separate purchase not essential to trapping eagles. There were separate songs and a myth, giving the right to call in a menstruating woman, which could be purchased. It referred to the capture of the leader of the eagles who, in return for having her life spared, promised unusual success if her song was sung when a menstruating woman was brought into the lodge. The consensus of both

## EAGLE-TRAPPING CEREMONY

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Mandan and Hidatsa informants was that women took a more prominent place in Mandan than in Hidatsa ceremonies and that bringing women into the lodges was a Mandan rite that some Hidatsa bought. This native belief is borne out by a woman's right to perform the Okipa ceremony with her brother's assistance and to own bundles of deceased relatives until a successor had qualified. 223  
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In the selection of eagle-trapping territory, consideration was given to the suitability of the region for hunting. Some informants thought that not more than one-third of the days were suitable for catching eagles. When the winds were not from a westerly direction, the party went out hunting and received their orders from the Chief of the Hunters, whose place in the ceremonial lodge was near the head of the lodge on the left side and opposite the leader. 223  
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The office of Chief of the Hunters was filled by the leader when selecting the places for the men when first entering the lodge. In mythological times, Two Men<sup>40</sup> discovered Black Bear's cub carrying a clay pot in which he cooked his food mysteriously, and, resolving to live leisurely thereafter, they stole the vessel. The cub chased them into Dog Den Butte and captured them with his snare. Cub contemplated killing them, but they agreed to do the hunting<sup>41</sup> for the eagle-trappers if their lives were spared. In time they acquired the position of leaders of the hunters. 223  
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The eagle-trapping territory was distantly removed from the summer villages in a region not occupied permanently by any tribe.<sup>42</sup> Except for sites on the east side of the Missouri River, the territory was deeply eroded with isolated wooded areas along, and adjacent to, the principal streams. The badlands region along the Little Missouri River and its tributaries was a favorite habitat of the elk, black-tail deer, and mountain sheep. White-tail deer remained more or less in the wooded bottom lands of streams, while buffalo and antelope ranged in herds and bands on the high grass plains a few miles from the principal streams. 223  
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40. See my manuscript on "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Organization" for an account of the exploits of these two characters.

41. Their medicine was the arrow.

42. See map of eagle-trapping camps (Fig. 28).

PEOPLE ABOVE CEREMONY

than skulls, which usually appear singly in refuse heaps, pits, or shallow graves.

Women took an active part in these ceremonies. Calf Woman thought that it was because they did not want their gardens burned by Sun, who she said once tried to marry Waving Corn. (People never prayed to the sun to bring warm weather. When the winter was severe, they prayed to Lone Man of the Okipa to come as the south wind.) When he was refused, he came four times, and each time the plants withered. Women would fast at these shrines to save their crops and ask help for their men away on the warpath.

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## NOTES ON EAGLE-TRAPPING

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I told you of the case where a man fasted in a bear's den, and the bear took a hold of him and threw him to one side. This man dreamed that night that the bear came and blessed him and told him that he would be a successful warrior and a brave man. Afterward a son was born to him; the son was Seven Bears. The Assiniboine came with the intention of destroying our village, but Seven Bears was brave. They shot him with arrows and bullets, but they had no effect on him. His horse was shot, but he got on another and came back. He fought the enemy and ran over them; he struck them so that the enemy turned and ran back. Torturing was a part of our prayers, for, whenever one prays, he should fast. In torturing, one will have a dream of a spirit, and that way he is blessed. By doing these things, some of the men got great power from the spirits. Crows Heart once saw that Old White Man's back was full of scars, and Crows Heart asked him how many times he had suffered. Old White Man could not remember; his skin had been pierced so many times.

The next one to be tortured was Packs Wolf. His suffering was inside of the lodge, where he was fastened to the roof. His feet were off of the ground, and a stick was given to him with which to swing himself. While he was hanging there, the leader sang his songs.

Then several days after that Spotted Weasel whittled four sticks, came back, and made a sweathouse. They ran sticks through his wrist and up to the braces of the sweat lodge, and he was also tortured on the breast. When one is tortured in the sweathouse, the women are not permitted to go into it at any time. The Crack Shot was Sitting Owl, and Spotted Weasel was his son-in-law, so he got another man to act in his place. He asked Raven Knows Nothing to do the torturing. When we went in there, the leader began to pour water on the stones, and we got down low near the ground, but Spotted Weasel could not, being tied up there near the roof. He cried to the spirits; it was a hardship for him to go through, but he did. After that, we went into our pits, but no one caught any more birds, even though we were there over one month.

Now that the sweathouse was made, each one of us got some good dried meat and a whole meat [the large piece stripped off of the length of the animal's back]. We paid the leader, and he took us into the sweat lodge to cleanse all of us. We broke camp and started for home. Bluestone and I, being single, left the others and came ahead.

On the other trips with other men, they would not let the women come into the lodge. I thought that the reason for being unlucky was because they had left the women in.

I heard that Blue Stone's father, Wood Mouth or Medicine Bird, whipped his wife one day when he was a leader and his men did not have any luck in catching the eagles. By doing that their luck changed from bad to good. They caught many eagles. I do not know if some great spirit told him to do that or not, but I do know that they ordinarily did not do that, for men, women, and children were expected to be kindhearted and not have any ill-feeling toward each other.

We did not change pipes but used both red and black stone, depending on the kind the leader had. In early days they did not have the red stone pipes. Then the stone was black, and the pipe was straight without the elbow. The hole was in the end, and the stone fitted in on the inside was called I-go-xE'.

In the ceremony they used a special medicine pipe taken from the bundles.

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## THE MANDANS.

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The sixth group was that of the "Black-tail Deer" and 561 consisted of men over fifty years of age. There were two women in this band who served food and distributed fresh water during the dances. The men wore a crown of bears' claws.

There were a few other dances which were bought and sold, 561 but which hardly deserve a place in the regular system. One of these was the dance of the "Half Shaven Head Band" which 424 the lowest band could buy before reaching the proper age to buy 535 into the "Soldier Band." Another was the "Old Dog Dance." The "Dog Band" could buy this of the "Buffalo Band" before becoming Buffalos themselves or being able to. The "Hot Dance" was danced at Rouhptare by the youngest band; and also at the Hidatsa village where it was purchased from the Arikara. The dancers danced barefoot over live coals and plunged their hands into boiling water.

The women, too, were divided into bands. There were four 561 of these of which the first was "The Band of the Gun" which consisted of the younger girls. Next was the "River Band." The third band was the "Hay Women" who sang only the scalp dance. The fourth and last band was that of the "Women of the White Cow," most of them were old, and they were all tattooed with black lines from the mouth to the base of the chin. [304]

The marriage customs of the Mandan Indians differed little 595 from those of their neighbors. Polygamy was common, although a large part of the men had but one wife. Descent was 611 probably along the male line, though there may have been remains of an older custom of descent along the female line, for all the horses captured by a young man belonged to his sister. The women worked hard and were sometimes badly treated 562 though not as a general rule. Lewis and Clarke says that infidelity was punishable by death. Maximilian says it was punishable by cutting off the woman's nose. When a man's wife was stolen he had a right to demand a horse from the abductor. Separations occurred among them quite frequently. 586 Virtue 831 among the women was held in high esteem but was rather scarce. There are accounts of a celebration where prizes were 171 given to the virtuous maids — these celebrations also took place

ten horses, and fastens them to the hut of the young woman, who gives them to her father. The latter then takes other horses, and if he has them not himself, his relations assist him, and these horses are fastened, in return, to the hut of the intended son-in-law. In such a case an estimate is previously made of the number of horses possessed by the woman's relations, for all presents are returned in equal number. The bride next boils some maize, and daily carries a kettle or dish filled with it to the hut of the bridegroom. After some time has elapsed, the young man repairs to the hut of his bride, where he passes the night with her, and the marriage is considered as complete. The young couple often continue to reside in the hut of the father-in-law, but they more frequently build a new hut for themselves; sometimes, however, they afterwards separate. The father-in-law is, subsequently, the principal person in the hut; everything depends on him, and is done on his account, and for him; if game is killed, the flesh is first presented to him, &c. There are often many children in these Indian families; some had as many as ten; yet, on the whole, the Indians have not so many children as the Whites, doubtless because they keep them longer at the breast. They are extremely fond of them, but the children are often weak and sickly, in consequence, it is supposed, of the hard labour which the women have to perform. I was universally assured, that the new-born children are of a reddish colour. The births are, in general, extremely easy, and the mother bathes in the river immediately afterwards, even if it is frozen; in ten days the child is considered as safe, having got over the most dangerous period. A person is paid to give it the name chosen by the parents and relations. The child is held up, then turned to all sides of the heavens, in the direction of the course of the sun, and its name proclaimed. They have cradles for their infants, consisting of a leather bag, which is suspended by a strap to a cross beam in the hut. These cradles of the Mandans are not so elegant and beautifully worked as those which we saw among the Sioux and Assiniboins. The children of these Indians are subject to no kind of discipline whatever; they may do and say whatever they please, and nobody finds fault with them. Everything is done to excite a spirit of independence and self-will in the boys; if the mother speaks to one of them, he will very likely slap her face, or kick her, nay, sometimes he will do the same to his father, who says, coolly, bowing his head, this boy will one day become a famous warrior. The men sometimes treat their wives very brutally; and it has not unfrequently happened, that a woman, after such treatment, has left the hut and hanged herself on a tree. This lately happened in the case of an aged woman, whose grown-up son had ill-treated her. She was missed, and was afterwards found suspended from a tree. The women have nothing to indemnify them for their incessant and laborious work, not even good clothing, for this right of the fair sex in Europe is claimed among the Indians by the men. It is singular that these women, who are condemned constantly to work like slaves, refuse to do any work whatever if they marry a white man, and, the Whites being entirely in the power of the Indians, and the relations of their wives, they are obliged to submit to this. Sisters have great

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## LETTER—No. 17.

## MANDAN VILLAGE, UPPER MISSOURI.

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171 I MENTIONED in the foregoing epistle, that the chiefs of the Mandans frequently have a plurality of wives. Such is the custom amongst all of these North Western tribes, and a few general remarks on this subject will apply to them all, and save the trouble of repeating them.

Polygamy is countenanced amongst all of the North American Indians, so far as I have visited them; and it is no uncommon thing to find a chief with six, eight, or ten, and some with twelve or fourteen wives in his lodge. Such is an ancient custom, and in their estimation is right as well as necessary.

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595 Women in a savage state, I believe, are always held in a rank inferior to that of the men, in relation to whom in many respects they stand rather in the light of menials and slaves than otherwise; and as they are the "hewers of wood and drawers of water," it becomes a matter of necessity for a chief (who must be liberal, keep open doors, and entertain, for the support of his popularity) to have in his wigwam a sufficient number of such handmaids or menials to perform the numerous duties and drudgeries of so large and expensive an establishment.

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462 There are two other reasons for this custom which operate with equal, if not with greater force than the one above assigned. In the first place, these people, though far behind the civilized world in acquisitiveness, have still more or less passion for the accumulation of wealth, or, in other words, for the luxuries of life; and a chief, excited by a desire of this kind, together with a wish to be able to furnish his lodge with something more than ordinary for the entertainment of his own people, as well as strangers who fall upon his hospitality, sees fit to marry a number of wives, who are kept at hard labour during most of the year; and the avails of that labour enable him to procure those luxuries, and give to his lodge the appearance of respectability which is not ordinarily seen. Amongst those tribes who trade with the Fur Companies, this system is carried out to a great extent, and the women are kept for the greater part of the year, dressing buffalo robes and other skins for the market; and the brave or chief, who has the greatest number of wives, is considered the most affluent and envied man in the tribe; for his table is most bountifully supplied, and his lodge the most abundantly furnished with the luxuries

clining posture, with the legs thrown out, and the body resting on one elbow and fore-arm, which are under them. The dishes from which they eat are invariably on the ground or floor of the lodge, and the group resting on buffalo robes or mats of various structure and manufacture. 264  
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The position in which the women sit at their meals and on other occasions is different from that of the men, and one which they take and rise from again, with great ease and much grace, by merely bending the knees both together, inclining the body back and the head and shoulders quite forward, they squat entirely down to the ground, inclining both feet either to the right or the left. In this position they always rest while eating, and it is both modest and graceful, for they seem, with apparent ease, to assume the position and rise out of it, without using their hands in any way to assist them.

These women, however, although graceful and civil, and ever so beautiful or ever so hungry, are not allowed to sit in the same group with the men while at their meals. So far as I have yet travelled in the Indian country, I never have seen an Indian woman eating with her husband. Men form the first group at the banquet, and women, and children and dogs all come together at the next, and these gormandize and glut themselves to an enormous extent, though the men very seldom do. 562  
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It is time that an error on this subject, which has gone generally abroad in the world, was corrected. It is everywhere asserted, and almost universally believed, that the Indians are "enormous eaters;" but comparatively speaking, I assure my readers that this is an error. I venture to say that there are no persons on earth who practice greater prudence and self-denial, than the men do (amongst the wild Indians), who are constantly in war and in the chase, or in their athletic sports and exercises; for all of which they are excited by the highest ideas of pride and honour, and every kind of excess is studiously avoided; and for a very great part of their lives, the most painful abstinence is enforced upon themselves, for the purpose of preparing their bodies and their limbs for these extravagant exertions. Many a man who has been a few weeks along the frontier, amongst the drunken, naked and beggared part of the Indian race, and run home and written a book on Indians, has, no doubt, often seen them eat to brutish excess; and he has seen them also guzzle whiskey (and perhaps sold it to them) till he has seen them glutted and besotted, without will or energy to move; and many and thousands of such things can always be seen, where white people have made beggars of them, and they have nothing to do but lie under a fence and beg a whole week to get meat and whiskey enough for one feast and one carouse; but amongst the wild Indians in this country there are no beggars—no drunkards—and every man, from a beautiful natural precept, studies to keep his body and mind in such a healthy shape and condition as will at all times enable him to use his weapons in self-defence, or struggle for the prize in their manly games. 261  
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